134. Certain needs of the Visvakarma community.

Mr. A. Muthu Jyotsier (Member, Nominated) represented that *Silpasastra* was an important science widely recognised as such and that it was necessary to revive the same. He suggested that the ancient text-books dealing with the science should be printed, that schools should be opened at important stations to teach the science and that it should form a portion of the curriculum of studies in schools. Carpentry should be taught as a special subject to the boys of the community. He also prayed that the members of the Visvakarma community might be encouraged by being given preference in the matter of appointments in the Survey, Engineering, and Industrial Departments and as drawing masters in the Education Department. He requested that at least two members of the community might be nominated to the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly and that the young men of the community who had passed the Matriculation Examination or held English School Leaving Certificates might be given scholarships to prosecute their studies in foreign countries. The Member also wanted half-fee concession for the Members of the community in the matter of English education.

Dewan's reply.—As regards the publication of the books referred to by you and their introduction as text-books, the existence of such books will be enquired into. One of the books you mentioned is going to be published by the Curator of Sanskrit Manuscripts. Enquiries will be made as to whether there are any more rare manuscripts, and the question of printing and publishing them will be considered by Government. If the publications are good enough to be used as text-books, the question of prescribing them as such will be considered by the Text Book Committee.

You have referred to carpentry as one of the subjects which should be taught to your children. Carpentry alone will not do. In the Quilon Carpentry School iron work is also going to be taught. In the Trivandrum School, building work and drawing are proposed to be taught, and other subjects will come in gradually. Similarly, Industrial schools will also increase gradually in number.

The question of giving encouragement to the members of your community in the public service is a different matter. We have to consider what the qualifications and service of the men referred to by you are.

In regard to the representation of your community on the Assembly and the Legislative Council by nomination, the only answer that I can give you is that the claims of your community will be considered along with those of other communities similarly situated.

As regards your request to depute one or two matriculates of your community for foreign training, I may say that matriculates will not do for the purpose. Neither they nor the Government will be benefited by the arrangement proposed.

As regards your request for fee concession to your community in the matter of English education, the question is engaging the consideration of Government.

135. Disabilities of the Ezhava community.

Mr. S. Kumaravelu Panikkar (Member, Nominated) dwelt upon the grievances suffered by the members of his community as a result of the obstacles that lay in the way of their admission into temples and prayed that this disability might be removed. The restrictions now enforced in regard to walking through public roads adjoining temples and the entry into temples themselves were driving many of the members of is community to accept the Christian faith, as, by becoming converts to that religion, hey were able to enjoy privileges for which they could not aspire before. He said that Government had issued a general order to the effect that the depressed classes should keep up a pollution distance of 66 feet when they approached temples. In the circumstances, the Member prayed that their grievances in that respect might be removed.

Dewan's reply.—In regard to the admission of members of the depressed classes into Sirkar temples, I have already given my reply to two previous members, and I shall have to give the same reply to you also. Government have issued no

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

general order to the effect that 66 feet. should be the distance within which approach to temples should be prohibited. There may be such a rule in respect of a particular temple.

136. Need for publishing a Proclamation conferring on the people of all classes the right of entry into all public places.

Mr. V. R. Kochunni Vaidyan (Member, Nominated) complained that Ezhavas and certain other classes of His Highness' subjects were not being allowed free access to all schools, streets, satroms, etc., and that it was necessary to publish a Proclamation allowing all classes of people free access to all public places. In view of the recent progress in education among the members of the Ezhava community which has given them a greater sense of self-respect, a mere statement from the Government that the disabilities of the community had been considerably reduced would not bring any satisfaction to them. Educated members belonging to other communities favoured the aspirations of the Ezhavas in this respect, as evidenced by the large number of signatories to the memorial presented by Mr. Padmanabha Pillai advocating the admission of Ezhavas into all temples. The Member, therefore, prayed that a Proclamation be issued as suggested above.

137. Disabilities arising from unapproachability and untouchability.

Mr. K. Kunju Panikkar (Member, Nominated) regretted that the answers elicited by interpellations in the Legislative Council in regard to the question of unapproachability and untouchability showed that Government did not fully realise the great awakening among all the depressed classes or the intensity of their feeling on this question. He prayed that the question be solved in the interests of the approacher among the various communities in this land and the healing up of their differences. The practice of unapproachability and untouchability now kept up was the greatest obstacle to the progress of the country and a bar to the enjoyment of full civic rights by the depressed classes. The institution of untouchability was most inhuman and superstitious, and the Government who educated the backward communities and made them think about their rights and self-respect should take early steps to do away with the institution. The Travancore Government was observing a policy of armed neutrality in the matter, stepping in at times when the rights of the privileged classes were reported to be infringed. One practical effect of keeping up the institution was to deny the backward communities entry into public temples. The enlightened members of other communities had, through newspapers and public meetings, shown their sympathy with the aspirations of the Ezhavas in this matter. He, therefore, requested that Government should go further on the policy pursued by them in respect of throwing roads and schools open to all classes and issue a Proclamation doing away with untouchability and unapproachability.

138. Social disabilities of non-Caste Hindus, with special reference to Ezhavas.

Mr. N. Kumaran Asan (Member, Nominated) said that, during the last session of the Assembly, the Dewan had replied that the creation of a Selection Board was engaging the attention of the Government with a view to give equal chances to all communities in the matter of entertainment in the public service, but that no announcement was made at the session of the current year regarding the constitution of the board. The Member prayed that Government might devote their best consideration to the matter and find out some means to satisfy the aspirations of all communities to enter the public service. He then dwelt on the desirability of throwing open all schools, satroms and public roads to all classes of people and said that the communities affected were, however, thankful to the Government for the sympathetic policy which was being pursued and requested that all restrictions in respect of these institutions and public roads might be removed.

As regards the question of admission to the temples, the Member was of opinion that the objection on religious grounds put forward by the Government was not sound.

Dewan's reply.—I am sorry that I cannot give you any other reply than what I gave to Messrs. Kunjuraman and Kittan in regard to the question of temple entry. In

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly